

RICHARD ARMSTRONG, B. 1805 - D. 1860

PAPERS 1829 - 1855

THE RICHARD ARMSTRONG PAPERS CONTAIN LETTERS SENT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN THE U. S., 1829-1854; LETTERS TO THE MISSION DEPOSITORY AND MISSIONARY FRIENDS IN HAWAII, 1833-1855; AND A LECTURE ON EDUCATION, UNDATED.

THE ARMSTRONG-CHAPMAN PAPERS ARE PHOTOCOPIES OF ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. WRITTEN TO ARMSTRONG'S BROTHER-IN-LAW , REUBEN CHAPMAN, AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS, THEY COVER THE YEARS 1837-1847, AND ARE FILMED AS A UNIT AT THE END OF THE RICHARD ARMSTRONG PAPERS.

Princeton Tenn. July 3rd 1829

Dear Brother:

owing to my absence from the Seminary, I have neglected to write to any of you for some time, but having returned yesterday after an absence of ~~six~~ weeks, I shall ^{be} my first business to drop you a few lines.

We have just had a vacation of ~~six~~ weeks, which I spent labouring in the Bible-cause on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It was not a season of any great enjoyment to me, inasmuch as the country allotted to me, was extensive, and in some parts difficult to explore. The climate there does not suit a northern constitution. The changes of weather are frequent and sudden, which has a tendency to produce fevers and agues, as well as every species of bilious diseases. However, by the preserving care of a Superintending Providence, escaped, and am in pretty good health.

I travelled two days on the salt water, and found the atmosphere extremely wholesome, and I thought, if John could be located for a season on the coast, and have the benefit of sea bathing, it would be of immense benefit to him. They have there every kind of fish, crabs, clams, lobsters &c. of which, if I recollect right, he is very fond, and they are wholesome. Wild fowls too are in great abundance, but not just at this season. The expense of his going there would not be very great. Boarding could be had for about 6 or 7 dollars a month.

The weather here is too cold for pleasure, but the place is healthy. The people are busy harvesting, but the grain is poor generally. At least it is not such grain as you have in Ireland mostly.

I suppose you are about beginning to harvest and have hardly time to read a letter. I wish you may have a plentiful crop, as the reward of your labour. The thought of harvest brings back to my mind some pleasing associations of days that are past when I was recoiling around amongst you, so briskly with a cradle in my hand. These times have gone by, and although reflecting upon them produces some sensations of pleasure, yet one side of them bears a melancholy aspect. It is natural for me to ask myself, where are many of those with whom, even in my years of childhood, I spent, and appreciated, and toiled in gathering the boundaries of water from the harvest field. Many now are scattered abroad, some are superannuated and bending over the grave, and others again have "gone the way of all the earth."

During my travels in the vacation, I had occasion to visit my friends in Maryland, who were glad to see me, and one of them made me a handsome present.

I wish you would write to me soon, and tell me all the news in your neighbourhood. You must have a good deal by this time. I wish to go home in the fall if I can, but the expense of travelling is so great, and I am obliged to be as economical as possible, so that I would not promise. Frequently in vacations we can recruit our funds a little, which

most of us are obliged to do. So long as I can hear that you are
at least all well, I am not uneasy, but if any thing should occur, write to
me soon. Is James doing pretty well? I sincerely hope he may
and soon He is sober and steady, which is much in his favour. Remember
me to all the friends, especially to my father's family.

I am still your friend and brother

Andrew Jeffrey Esq

Rich: Armstrong

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1834

Andrew Gaffy Esq

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Princeton Theo. Sem.

Sept.

1830.

Dear Sisters:-

A good while has elapsed since I wrote you a line, but the reason was that I had nothing particular to communicate, and it would be useless to send you a sheet of white paper - you however are, amongst you, a letter in my debt, for if I mistake not, I wrote last.

My health is now unusually good, we have had Mr. Halstea here from N. Y. curing us all of the Dyspepsia, he has done great benefit to most of us - since applying his remedy I feel much better - costiveness and indigestion have entirely left me and they troubled me very much before.

By this time you will begin to scold about my bad writing, but it is never best to read a letter too fast - indeed, I believe, if it requires the whole family to make it out, there will be nothing lost.

Our vacation commences on Tuesday next, during which I expect to spend my time in Lancaster Co. and Adams Co. Pa. In the former there is a revival of religion in which I expect, for a while, to labor for a week or two - It will be the delight of my heart to get among those who are inquiring the way to Zion. I feel need of reviving myself very much; for I am not as much engaged as I should be, and as the spirit of the gospel, as well as of the age require - our time here is but short, and fleeting, and eternity is long and fast approaching - all depends upon time, and time is made up of days and moments, therefore, the moments of our lives should all be improved.

I expected to take license this fall but have concluded to put it off till spring by the wish of Presbytery - If I had liberty to preach I would endeavor to go home this fall, but, if Providence permit, I shall surely be home in the spring vacation.

I forget whether I ever mentioned to you the possibility of my going to the heathen to preach the gospel, if not, you will perhaps be surprised to hear of the fact. The condition of five or six hundred millions of the human race that now sit in gross darkness has long occupied my attention - If I am ever to preach the everlasting gospel, it will only be on the authority of our Saviour's ascending command, which is to go and "teach all nations" not a part of the nations, but all nations. This command is get in full force and to disobey it, is to declare, we are not true disciples, for He says, "If you love me keep my Commandments". The commission then, on which I am to act, is founded on Divine authority, and that is to "go into all the world" and preach the gospel. It is true that this course of life subjects a person to many privations and severe trials, but we live for eternity, not for time, These light afflictions work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory - those who would gain Heaven must go through much tribulation - No cross, no crown, is a true maxim - The very condition of our discipleship is a total renunciation of the world with all it holds dear, we are not therefore, to consult the will of the flesh, but to seek for the path of duty - This is not so much a state of attainment as of desire; not a state of reward but of probation - when the question therefore regards duty, the pleasures of life must be excluded.

I dare say it would be hard for you to see me go to a foreign land never to return - The ties of nature are strong and tender; but for the honor of Christ who came as a Missionary from the skies to redeem a fallen world, you should be willing to see me go any where, I shall expect, by the next letter you write, that you will say something on this subject - tell me whether or not you are willing that I should "go far hence to the gentiles" - keep the thing among yourselves and let it not get abroad that I expect to be a Missionary.

I have a very intimate class-mate by the name of W. P. Alexander, who is of the same mind on this subject with myself. He is a man of first rate talents, good acquirements, and generous spirit - The probability is, should Providence permit, we may go in company to a foreign station.

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I am about starting to Philadelphia, on my way to Lancaster- My old friend Mrs. Neilson is here, in good health and spirits - She appears to be a devoted christian and is doing much good - I intended to have written some letters to James and Anthony, but this is a time of such continued hustle, that I have not been able to do it.

You may expect me home next spring, if God wills; you will not see much more of me in this life, but let us all endeavor to meet on Zion's Hill above. Farewell, Pray for me continually.

R. Armstrong.

Tell Andrew Guffey I would be glad if he could send me about thirty or forty dollars by James Pollock when he returns , this will answer until I get home, I hope.

(COPY.)

Princeton, Aug. 25th., 1831.

Dear Sisters:

I wrote to the Squire a few weeks ago, telling him of my intention to leave this land soon for the Sandwich Islands - what do you think of this? Does it shock you? Let your minds be calm, I am in good spirits; altho bonds and imprisonments may await me, still I am a good soldier of the cross - it will be well with me. None of these things move me - why should I not rejoice to be an Ambassador of Heaven to a dying world - if my labors and suffering are great, my reward will be great also - If I suffer with Christ, I shall also rejoice with him - Let then every tear be dried up and let us prepare to meet at God's right hand.

This last week has been perhaps, the most important one of my life - you will ask why? Because of one event which has transpired - The God of my life has directed my steps to a spot where "grows a flower of nameless charms" - Its richness and fragrance, and not its beauty, attracted me - It has hued and blown under the rays of a New England sun, and has always been by an Eastern breeze - Me thinks I hear you now ask, what does he mean? R - has been courting or something as bad - you have guessed aright - He has - but you shall hear more on this subject soon, the matter is not fully determined and when it is you shall hear all about it.

Now, sisters, I know you are fond of industry, and so are some of your female neighbors; you have been brought up to it, and will not therefore think it hard if I impose a pretty heavy task upon you - The Board of Miss. has sent me a list of clothing as an outfit for my mission, and there are some of the articles which you can make better than any body else, if you can find time to make them, and I will visit you, with the leave of Providence, in the former part of October, and get them, and pay for them. The following is a list of the articles I wish you to make or get made if you can:

3 Doz. Cotton Shirts & 1 Doz. Collars.
3 Doz. White Cravats.
1/2 Doz. White Pocket Handkerchiefs.
1/2 Doz. Thin Flannel Wrappers made very large (don't make these till you see me)
3 pr. Flannel Drawers. (see me)
2 pr. Cotton Drawers.
2 Doz. pair of cotton or linen stockings - short
1/2 Doz. pr. pillow cases.
1/2 Doz. Table-cloths
1 Doz. Towels.

You will have until towards the last, perhaps the 20th., of Oct. to provide these articles, and I wish you to get them of a good substantial kind, and preserve the bills until I come. The Board allow something to purchase an outfit, but I do not know how much it is - but if you will expend a little labor and time in fitting me out, you labor shall not be forgot, tho. I be seperated from you by the Waters of the deep. If you find it too much, perhaps your female friends will help you for the good of the cause - Indeed I should like this much as it will enable me to recollect them with more interest and it would interest them in the cause of missions. Get them together then and make a frolick of it, and tell them when I come I will preach them a serman in return.

In case the affair mentioned in the former part of my letter succeeds, I intend to take her with me home, altho. she lives in connecticut - she is desirous of accompanying me, if she goes with me. Her name is Clarissa Chapman and I never saw her until last week, but knew her character for a short time - more of this hereafter. I am overwhelmed with business as I am chosen to deliver the Annual address before the Society of Inquiry on Missions, and have a long examination before

You would be astonished at the list of articles of every kind, which the Board has sent me, as necessary for the Mission - it will require much time and trouble to prepare them all, but you will assist me very much by securing the articles specified. Farewell for the present.

J. & M. Armstrong.

Your brother,
R. Armstrong.

Recommendation
by A. Alexander
of Richard's
qualifications
as a missionary.

The bearer Mr. Richard Armstrong,
a graduate of Dickinson College, Carlisle,
Pennsylvania, and a licentiate of the Pres-
bytery of Baltimore, has been a student in the
Theological Seminary at this place, nearly three
years, during which time his conduct has been
correct, and his character irreproachable.

Mr. Armstrong has been induced by a pure zeal
for the glory of God and ~~the salvation~~ desire for the salvation
of the heathen, to devote himself to the work of a mis-
sionary in foreign lands. In the prosecution of this
enterprise he has acted with uniform prudence, ener-
gy and consistency, and will be accompanied with
the Christian esteem and prayers of all who feel a
deep interest in the Redeemer's Kingdom.

I would also certify, that Mr. Armstrong is pos-
sessed of respectable talents, and is of a friendly

and affectionate disposition; so that as far as
I can judge he would be a kind and attentive hus-
band to ~~any~~ ^{any} lady whom he would choose as a companion
in entering on this important enterprise. It is also
a fact well known, that there is not now in the
world any Missionary Station which promises
more comfort and success than that of the Sandwich
Islands.

Alexander

Princeton N. J.

Sept. 10. 1831.

Recommendation
by A. Alexander
of Richard's
qualifications
as a missionary

MS. A. 9. 2. 1. 1. 1.

Dear Brother,

Ship America,

Rio Janeiro Jan. 26th 1832.

Your will no doubt have found me before this letter will reach you, by one which I sent to Lane and May. But that only gives an account of our welfare up to the 15th of the month; since that we have been passing through a succession of delightful and distressing scenes, of which you will desire to hear some account. On Monday the 11th our company with Capt. Swain, and Dr. Chapin went on shore to see the city and if possible to procure boarding for our stay while here. The boarding was too expensive, being \$7.00 per week each, and therefore we concluded to live on board the vessel, which we have found since to be by far the best plan. But you cannot conceive my astonishment when I landed on palace-square, just opposite the Empirical Palace mentioned by Stewart (see his last journal). This is a very extensive building, built of stone & plastered, which is the case with all the houses here, and covered with tile, that is, a material made as you make bricks, and formed as if you would lay a shingle lengthways on a log of 10 inches in diameter, and bend it close to it, so as to make it hollow, or like a trough with a round bottom. They last for ages and make a good roof. The architecture of the palace as well as that two churches, which stand in the same square is rather splendid: But get not to be compared with many buildings in N.Y. Phila. or Balt. - But what attracted my attention and pained me most, was the multitude of negroes, that crowded the square (which is an area of about 2 acres) and the streets some carrying fruit for sale, some carrying barrels of salt and bags of coffee on their heads, ~~some~~ ^{all} half naked & some of them entirely naked: And you would often see several droves at once, going along at a slow jog-trot, with loads on their heads that you w^d think w^d crush them, and at the same time all singing or rather hollering with a tedious noise, some momeaning song. Again you would see often ten or more fastened together with a large chain round their necks, and sometimes round their ankles, and thus doomed to carry heavy casks of water on their heads to the various public buildings in the city, such as the prisons, the garrisons, &c. These are the criminals who have been guilty of some offence against the government. There are at least 3 negroes for one citizen in Rio, & to look along the streets you w^d think there were ten. They are doomed to perpetual slavery, and are liable at all times to be whipped to death, starved to death, or killed in any other way by their masters, and no one notices it. They are sent out in the morning by their owners and required to bring so much money home at night or be punished. O Slavery thou scourge of the poor African, how I hate thee, was the language of my soul! Well might Cowper say in his glow of indignation at the oppression of the slave -

"I would not have a slave to till my ground
To carry me, to fan me when I sleep
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That ~~the world~~ ^{the world} brought and sold have ever seen.
That must rather be the slave myself
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him!"

Man takes his fellow man, and chains him and tasks him
and exacts his sweat, with stripes & scourges, that mercy would
weep to see inflicted on a beast, and why? Because he is poor
-wretch and poor, and has a skin not coloured like his own.
But with jump from this unpleasant theme -

There is one English Tavern in Rio, kept by a Mrs
Lorson, a very genteel woman, and on Tuesday the 17th all our
company, husbands and wives, went on shore to see the city. We
were literally a gaze and a laughing stock to the citizens; for
you must keep in mind that no ladies here appear in pub-
lic: and for man and wife to walk along the street together
is outrageous: Therefore the doors and windows were crowded
with gazers of all colours and ages. After taking some re-
freshment we promiscuously visited the streets, and the markets to
see the city. Capt. Briggs of N. Bedford's Map, being here with
his map, accompanied us; He is a pious man, and treated
us like a brother. The streets are narrow and crowded. The
stores are rich and full - especially those of the jewelers, and other
"fancy stores," were truly splendid: The market is miserable
when compared with that of N. Y. or Phil. You see but little
meat as it cannot be preserved here with salt, and it is rather
out of season for fruits - yet we have had as many oranges,
bananas, sweet Lemons, water & Muskmelons, green corn,
pine apples, plantain, cucumbers, peaches, &c. as we wished.

Many of these were delicious after the coarse fare of the ship.
We dined at Mrs Lorson's, and the pleasure of being introduced
to several citizens of the U. S. who dined with us. Mr Wright
the former American Consul is a very obliging man - after
dinner we visited an eminence in the south part of the city,

on which stands the Church of St. Sebastian, the founder of the city.
The prospect was fine indeed: Next day I visited Signal Hill
on which stands the Telegraph. The city lay as a map at my
feet, and the mountains rose around me in all their grandeur.

The fact the scenery of Rio exceeds any thing I ever beheld for grand-
eur and beauty. It consists principally in the elevation of the
mountains, whose peaks often rise 1000 feet above the level of the
bay, while the clouds roll over and hang around their tops.

But I can give you no idea of it by description. - Since
the time just mentioned I have visited the Convent of St. Antonio
which is a tremendous building, and many of its apartments
are gilted from top to bottom. I was struck with astonish-
ment at its splendor and richness: yet it all seems to be for no
purpose, as it is frequented by but few persons; In fact the cath-
-olic religion is very much in decline here, although it is the
only kind that is much known here. The churches are also often
-left, but thinly attended. I suppose the silver & gold of one of these
churches wd more than build half a dozen of our common
american churches. I have also visited some splendid
gardens, in which grow in all their perpetual greenness and
beauty, the orange, the lemon, limes, pomegranate, fig, cocoa-
-nut, bread-fruit, banana, plantain, and a great variety
of vegetables, and the most beautiful flowers I ever saw. On
Saturday last we got permission to visit the Museum, and
were very much gratified indeed. In some respects it excels

any seeds saw. particularly in the mineral department, the beauty of the insects and the color and variety. I have seen the American mentioned by St. Leonard, the most beautiful bird I ever saw. There are seven Egyptian Mummies deposited there and some other relics of interest. The war-dress of native Brazilian Indians is a splendid thing truly. It is chiefly formed of feathers of the wild fowl caught in the forest. A man dressed in it, scarcely resembles a human being. I had on the Capt's coat & it made a great laugh.

There are several Sea Captains in this port from Baltimore, and other parts of the States who have been very polite to us ever since we have been here. Their names are Capt. Holbrook, Horstie, Phillips, Chase, & Hamilton. I had some introduction to Capt. Harvie in Balt. and he is an ardent friend of Campbell's of Balt. with whom I have always lived in the city. On this account he has taken a lively interest in my welfare. He comes to see us every day, sometimes in his boat and men have been at my service when I was on her convenience on the voyage. On Sat. the boat came at the appointed hour, to carry us on board. We had a congregation of about 100 persons, chiefly men and sailors. It was an interesting season indeed. Alexander preached, and there was deep attention. After service Capt. Harvie took my wife & self on his own ship, the Lafage, to dine with him, and then to Praga Amelia, a small town down the harbor, which is the county seat of a pious and wealthy merchant named Stewart. There he had a pleasant congregation. Capt. Swain, Holbrook, Chase, & Phillips were also with us, together with several English ladies & gentlemen. In this Mr. Ker we have found a most cordial friend. He has had us to visit him there after noon, and a more delightful spot I never beheld that that in which he lives, near the base of the Sugar-loaf mountain. This mountain stands in a great valley between two lofty ranges of mountains, covered with cocoa and trees, and the most beautiful shrubbery. His garden in which the house stands abounded with orange trees, lemons, bananas, cinnamon, cloves, and a rich variety of spices. He has also one apple tree, with a solitary apple on it. I felt in this like meeting with an old friend. Mr. Ker's family is set in England, and our ladies have taken charge of his domestic affairs while with him. My Clarissa is now at his house and will be probably till we sail, which will be on Saturday.

Feb. 1st I left in the Port of Rio in consequence of a delay in the repair of the masts, and one of our eyes being injured. He went on shore several days ago and getting intoxicated, and has been in prison. There are still to be not less than 100 prisoners in this city, and their condition is deplorable beyond description. On Saturday last I received a special request to preach on board the Succalossa, which carries the Bethel-Flag. It came from several masters of vessels, and would not refuse, although it was not any time to preach. Quite a number of officers, sailors & citizens attend. The Lord enabled me to preach with plainness. In the afternoon most of our company went to Mr. Ker's and to the meeting. My wife & myself remained on all night. On Monday Capt. Harvie brought us to the Anrick in his boat, where

lacked while interest in my twice; His dear C. Bethel-Flag and four board. we stars of reports. Brother on board this

we are ~~waiting~~ the sailing, the vessel. yesterday I laboured all day
 in fixing my state-room for the voyage. it was no small job as you
 will think, you ever go to sea. My hands are to-day blistered in ~~several~~
 places. I have done almost every kind of domestic work, since
 I have been at sea, except cooking. We have water to wash but few
 clothes, and that is only the rain-water we catch in a few small
 vessels, but what washing has been done I have done it myself as
 Clarissa has been most of the time too delicate to do it. But we are
 obliged to go pretty shortly ahead. - - - Tomorrow you
 will see we expect to put out to sea. The men are just now weighing the
 anchor, and therefore I must close. It may be a good while before
 you will hear from ^{again} me. But let me hear from you as soon as possible; and
 let me hear that my dear sister has had no ill news.

Mean
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Rev. Anthony Hanson
 New Britain
 Conn. 1836

The longer I live and the more I see of the world the more
 I love the gospel, and the land where it is made known. Reli-
 gion is a thing unknown here almost, or only known to be
 scoffed at & contemned, & what is the consequence? The land
 is filled with violence, oppression, tyranny, dishonesty, and
 every species of corruption; even adultery itself is not uncom-
 mon. But in the religion of Christ there is a sure remedy, it
 forbids under the sanction of God every kind of corruption, &
 imbricates every thing that is loved and pursued. It is a balm
 for every wound, and a sure preservative against all sin. Let
 it shall be embraced by every nation, and in the end the go-
 righteousness shall prevail. O that the gospel be a de-
 sidered Christian, and soon we will meet in heaven, where all will
 be well. I have just asked Clarissa, if she has any message to
 send, and she says, "I have said to Anthony, all that I have to say
 is, give my respects to them all." She is now better with
 me, and is writing a letter and is very well. I can never be sufficiently
 thankful to God for such a kind, affectionate and sufficient
 wife. She is to me a great comfort and a great blessing every
 day. - - - Our company are all well and in good spirits.
 Your affectionate Sister
 Hannah